a drain pump assembly in flow communication with said main pump assembly; and

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a fine filter assembly in flow communication with said main pump assembly and with said drain pump assembly, said fine filter assembly comprising a filter body comprising an inlet and an outlet, said inlet and said outlet located substantially adjacent one another and proximate an outer perimeter of said filter body, and an extended flow path joining said inlet and said outlet.

17. (once amended) A dishwasher system comprising:

a tub comprising a sump portion;

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a fluid circulation assembly in flow communication with said sump portion, said fluid circulation assembly including a fine filter assembly, said fine filter assembly comprising a filter body comprising an inlet and an outlet, said inlet and said outlet located substantially adjacent one another and proximate an outer perimeter of said filter body, and an extended flow path joining said inlet and said outlet.

Remarks

The Office Action mailed June 4, 2003 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-20 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-20 stand rejected.

The rejection of Claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Miller, U.S. Patent No. 6,418,943 (hereinafter referred to as "Miller") is respectfully traversed.

Miller describes a dishwasher (200) with a soil separator and pump assembly (222) located in a sump (218) for recirculating wash liquid from the sump through a tub (212). Wash liquid and entrained soils flow, therefore, through a secondary outlet (240) into a soil collector

(270). As shown in Figure 4, the soil collector includes a main body (272) and a top panel (274). The main body is a generally circular, cup-like member which is secured to a bottom wall (216) of the wash tub. The main body includes an outer flange which forms a coarse grate through which wash liquid flows on its path toward a pump inlet (236). The main body has a center opening or conduit (275) which receives fluid flow from a main outlet (238) of a pump chamber (232). A bearing hub (277) may be partially positioned in a center conduit (275) for directing wash liquid to spray devices (224).

The main body further includes an inlet (276) for receiving wash liquid from the secondary outlet. The top panel forms a top wall of the soil collector. The top panel has a solid wall portion (281) which overlies the inlet. The solid wall portion and a channel (283) in the main body combine to form an inlet conduit or path (310), as shown in Figures 4 and 6. The top panel further includes a plurality of openings (282) which are provided with filter screen panels (284). The portion of the top panel which includes a plurality of openings combines with the main body for forming a soil separation channel (280), as shown in Figure 7.

The pressure generated by an overloaded or clogged filter screens (284) will cause the wash liquid flowing through conduit to be redirected out of the soil collector through an opening (316). The opening, therefore, provides a soil collector bypass system when the filter screens are clogged.

Claim 1 recites a fine filter assembly for a dishwasher, the fine filter assembly including a filter body including "an inlet and an outlet, said inlet located substantially adjacent said outlet, said inlet and said outlet proximate an outer perimeter of said filter body, and an extended flow path joining said inlet and said outlet".

Miller neither describes nor suggests a fine filter assembly for a dishwasher, the fine filter assembly including a filter body including an inlet and an outlet, the inlet located substantially adjacent the outlet, the inlet and the outlet proximate an outer perimeter of the filter body, and an extended flow path joining the inlet and the outlet. Moreover, Miller neither describes nor

suggests an inlet located substantially adjacent the outlet and the inlet and the outlet proximate an outer perimeter of the filter body. Rather, Miller describes a soil separation channel wherein the fluid inlet and outlet are on opposite sides of a centrally located chamber in the soil collector, and wherein at least the fluid inlet is located in a central portion of the soil collector.

For the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Miller.

Claims 2-8 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 2-8 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 2-8 are likewise patentable over Miller.

Claim 9 recites a fluid circulation assembly for a dishwasher system, the fluid circulation assembly including "a main pump assembly; a drain pump assembly in flow communication with said main pump assembly; and a fine filter assembly in flow communication with said main pump assembly and with said drain pump assembly, said fine filter assembly comprising a filter body comprising an inlet and an outlet, said inlet and said outlet located substantially adjacent one another and proximate an outer perimeter of said filter body, and an extended flow path joining said inlet and said outlet".

Miller neither describes nor suggests a fluid circulation assembly for a dishwasher system, the fluid circulation assembly including a main pump assembly, a drain pump assembly in flow communication with the main pump assembly, and a fine filter assembly in flow communication with the main pump assembly and with the drain pump assembly, the fine filter assembly including a filter body including an inlet and an outlet, the inlet and the outlet located substantially adjacent one another and proximate an outer perimeter of the filter body, and an extended flow path joining the inlet and the outlet. Moreover, Miller neither describes nor suggests an inlet and the outlet located substantially adjacent one another and proximate an outer perimeter of the filter body. Rather, Miller describes a soil separation channel wherein the fluid inlet and outlet are on opposite sides of a centrally located chamber in the soil collector, and wherein at least the fluid inlet is located in a central portion of the soil collector.

For the reasons set forth above, Claim 9 is submitted to be patentable over Miller.

Claims 10-16 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 9. When the recitations of Claims 10-16 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 9, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 10-16 are likewise patentable over Miller.

Claim 17 recites a dishwasher system including "a tub comprising a sump portion; a fluid circulation assembly in flow communication with said sump portion, said fluid circulation assembly including a fine filter assembly, said fine filter assembly comprising a filter body comprising an inlet and an outlet, said inlet and said outlet located substantially adjacent one another and proximate an outer perimeter of said filter body, and an extended flow path joining said inlet and said outlet".

Miller neither describes nor suggests a dishwasher system including a tub including a sump portion, a fluid circulation assembly in flow communication with the sump portion, the fluid circulation assembly including a fine filter assembly, the fine filter assembly including a filter body including an inlet and an outlet, the inlet and the outlet located substantially adjacent one another and proximate an outer perimeter of the filter body, and an extended flow path joining said inlet and said outlet. Moreover, Miller neither describes nor suggests an inlet and the outlet located substantially adjacent one another and proximate an outer perimeter of the filter body. Rather, Miller describes a soil separation channel wherein the fluid inlet and outlet are on opposite sides of a centrally located chamber in the soil collector, and wherein at least the fluid inlet is located in a central portion of the soil collector.

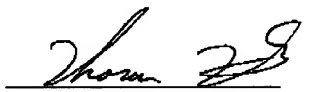
Claim 17 is therefore submitted to be patentable over Miller.

Claims 18-20 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 17. When the recitations of Claims 18-20 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 17, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 18-20 likewise are patentable over Miller.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102 rejection of Claims 1-20 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,



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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Hegeman et al.

Serial No.: 09/742,548

Filed: December 22, 2000

For: DISHWASHER FINE FILTER ASSEMBLY WITH FULL DRAIN SLOPE

Art Unit: 1746

Examiner: Perrin, Joseph

SUBMISSION OF MARKED UP CLAIMS AND PARAGRAPHS

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In furtherance of the response to the Office Action dated June 4, 2003 and made final, Applicant respectfully requests entry and consideration of the following amendment.

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (once amended) A fine filter assembly for a dishwasher, said fine filter assembly comprising a filter body comprising an inlet and an outlet, said inlet located substantially adjacent said outlet, said inlet and said outlet proximate an outer perimeter of said filter body, and an extended flow path joining said inlet and said outlet.

9. (once amended) A fluid circulation assembly for a dishwasher system, said fluid circulation assembly comprising:

a main pump assembly;

a drain pump assembly in flow communication with said main pump assembly; and

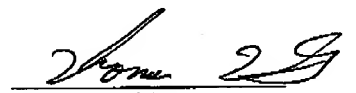
a fine filter assembly in flow communication with said main pump assembly and with said drain pump assembly, said fine filter assembly comprising a filter body comprising an inlet and an outlet, said inlet and said outlet located substantially adjacent one another and proximate an outer perimeter of said filter body [said outlet], and an extended flow path joining said inlet and said outlet.

17. (once amended) A dishwasher system comprising:

a tub comprising a sump portion;

a fluid circulation assembly in flow communication with said sump portion, said fluid circulation assembly including a fine filter assembly, said fine filter assembly comprising a filter body comprising an inlet and an outlet, said inlet and said outlet located substantially adjacent one another and proximate an outer perimeter of said filter body [said outlet], and an extended flow path joining said inlet and said outlet.

Respectfully Submitted,



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